(c) The issue of reservation/de-reservation of items for exclusive manufacture in the SSI Sector is examined on a continual basis by the Government through consultations with various stakeholders and by the Advisory Committee constituted under the Industries (Development & Regulation) Act, 1951. These reviews consider various relevant aspects including *inter alia* trends and development in external trade, domestic and global competitiveness, potential for employment and export, technical feasibility and economic viability of manufacture in the small scale sector etc.

Closure of SSIs

3082. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that thousands of Small Scale Industries (SSI) units are on the verge of closure due to unprecedented rise in the price of natural rubber;

(b) if so, the reasons for this price rise; and

(c) the remedial steps Government propose to take to prevent closure of SSI units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) As per the information received from the Rubber Board, with the integration of the Indian economy with the global economy, the domestic price of natural rubber is moving in tandem with the international market which has been moving up. The increase in rubber prices is mainly due to increased demand for the rubber and the production not keeping pace with consumption. However, the rubber Board has not received any representation from any of the rubber manufacturing units or their representatives regarding closure of any small scale unit due to increase in the price of natural rubber.

Closure of SSIs in Rajasthan

3083. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of small scale industries lying closed in Rajasthan, during the last 3 years and as on date, district-wise;